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ABSTRACT

This publication reviews and examines similarities in the writings of major teacher education reform advocates, including John Goodlad, The Holmes Group, the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and the Academy for Educational Development. Based upon a compendium of recurring themes, the report provides the following recommendations: (1) schools of education must model the good teaching that they advocate; (2) improvements in teacher training must reflect the teacher's need to understand the learner, the process of learning, the influence of culture upon learners, a strong underpinning of subject-area and pedagogical-content knowledge, and the ability to model critical thinking; (3) continued research into the practice of teaching is needed; (4) efforts must be made to strengthen and integrate the clinical experience of teachers; (5) schools of education need to regulate more stringently the selection of teacher education candidates and recruit underrepresented populations into teaching; and (6) improved teacher education should extend beyond the walls of the university, embracing collaboration with local schools, state policy makers, credentialing organizations, and others. (LL)

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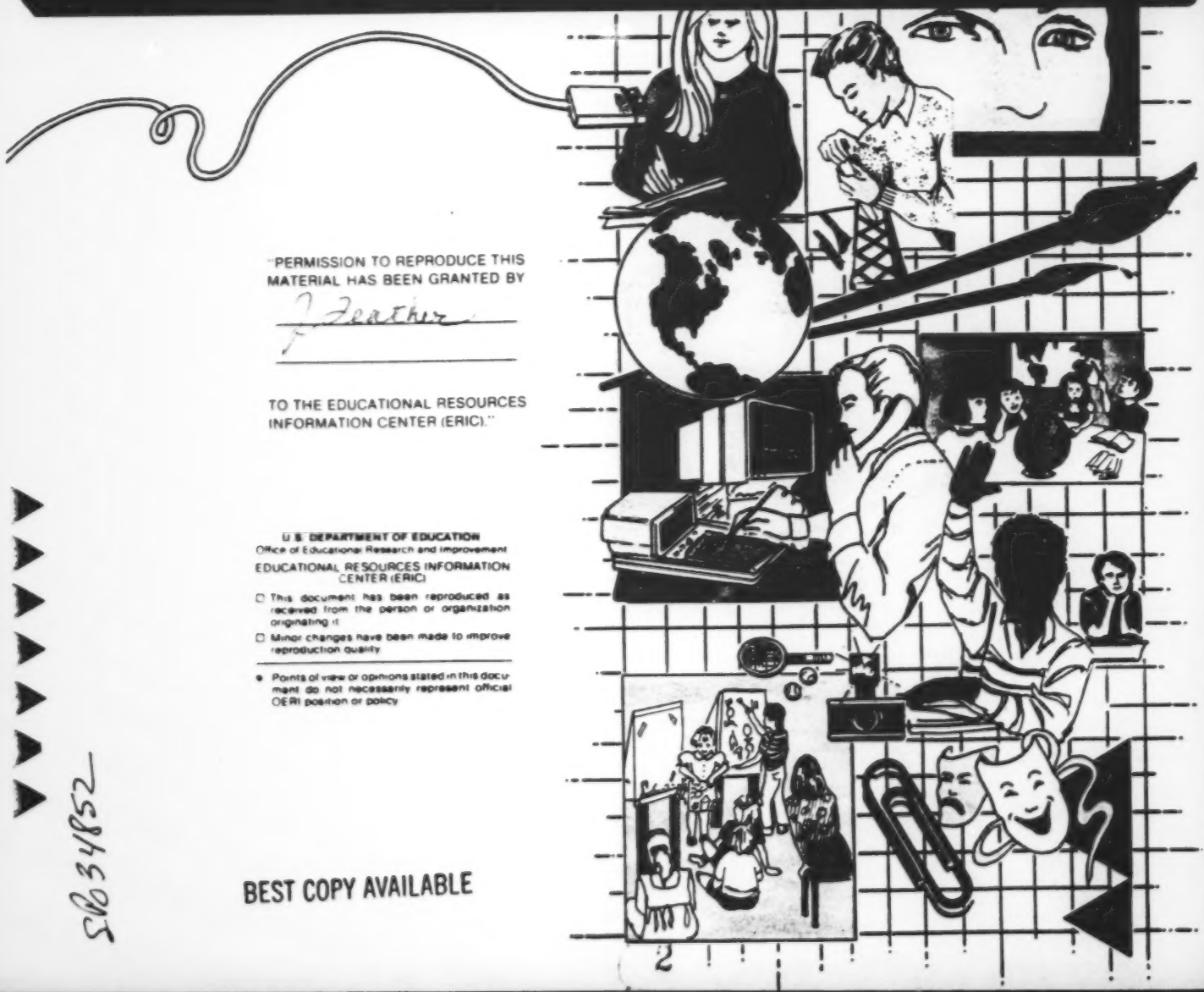

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IMPROVING TEACHER PREPARATION:

What the Reform Reports Recommend

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May 1993

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Under the direction of Calvin Frazier, associate director of the School of Education at the University of Denver and ECS senior consultant, this work is part of a broader ECS policy analysis of teacher education reform efforts. ECS appreciates the time and effort devoted to this particular document by Linda Sand Guest, assistant professor at the University of Denver, who examined various national reports about improving the preparation of teachers.

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Introduction

Education reform has been a topic of popular debate since the inception of public schools. In the last 10 years, there has been an astounding and confusing array of reform reports and proposals addressing the subject of reforming the education system and improving schools. A plethora of recommendations to improve the education of future teachers has been buried within any number of these reports and proposals. Although many of the recommendations have individual merit, their support is at best narrow and at worst in competition with myriad other resolutions, some of which are equally noteworthy and neglected. It is time to scrutinize the essence of these diverse reports, focusing upon those that pertain to the improvement of teacher education; extract relevant areas of overlap; and integrate their combined wisdom to chart an ingenious and reflective new direction for schools of education, in general, and teacher preparation programs, specifically.

If the goal of education reform is to improve the quality of instruction students receive, the quality of teaching must improve. Common sense dictates that such efforts should begin within teacher preparation programs. However, teacher preparation programs alone cannot be expected to implement change that will be significant, lasting and influential. Whatever the preservice training given to future teachers, the culture of the profession they are about to enter, as well as that of the individual school, is bound to have noticeable effects upon their abilities to introduce change. Consequently, although one consistent recommendation is that reform must take place simultaneously across a variety of educational fronts, it must be recognized that only one of those identifiable fronts is comprised of teacher preparation programs, including the organizations, institutions and individuals with whom they function.

Such reform seems complicated by the prevailing consensus that schools of education are woefully deficient. *A Nation Prepared*, released in 1986 by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, discussed the stagnation of teacher education programs over the years. According to this report, whereas teachers were among the best educated members of the populace 50 years ago, their success in educating the community without accompanying significant changes in the way they themselves are educated has resulted in a diminished respect for teachers:

> But the issue is not respect. The vital point is that the kinds of teachers needed in the years ahead will require far more rigorous preparation than all but a few receive now. This is true both with respect to their general education as undergraduates and the development of their skills as teachers.

Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy. *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986.

Indeed, if teacher preparation programs and their tangential institutions are to confront future demands adequately, it would behoove them to address systematically, efficiently and consistently those consensual areas of change already identified within the reform proposals presently before them. This paper looks at those areas.

Strengthening the Education of Teachers

Model Good Teaching

The constant failure of most teacher education courses to model the desired level of competent teaching is one of the many weaknesses noted by John I. Goodlad in his studies of teacher education. As early as 1984, he observed that "teacher education programs are disturbingly alike and almost uniformly inadequate." In defining "19 postulates" for improving teacher education (see *Teachers For Our Nation's Schools*), he stated: "Modeling is regarded as a powerful teaching device. For

Goodlad, John I. *Teachers For Our Nation's Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers, 1990.

teacher education programs not to be models of educating is indefensible."

The Holmes Group. *Tomorrow's Teachers: A Report of the Holmes Group.* East Lansing, Michigan: The Holmes Group, 1986.

Tomorrow's Teachers, a 1986 report of the Holmes Group, declared, "The undergraduate education that intending teachers receive is full of the same bad teaching that litters American high schools." Such comments coalesce into one of the principal recommendations of these and other reform reports: ***schools of education must model the good teaching that they advocate***. As the Holmes Group noted in *Work in Progress: The Holmes Group One Year On*:

The Holmes Group. *Work in Progress: The Holmes Group One Year On.* East Lansing, Michigan: The Holmes Group, 1989.

> The unique province of the education school is pedagogy. Teacher educators must be especially attentive to the quality of teaching in their courses — modeling the teaching that they advocate, exemplifying concern for teaching quality to their students and to colleagues in the arts and sciences.

Improve Teacher Education

In addition to modeling good teaching, many reports made specific recommendations for ***improvements in teacher education.*** As described in reform reports, a composite definition of a competent teacher would include the following traits: an in-depth knowledge of subject area and its pedagogy; an understanding of child and adolescent development; a knowledge of teaching and learning; an understanding of the workings of the world and, more specifically, of the social relationships within a classroom; and an insatiable desire to learn. Competent teachers communicate well, offer inspiration, are reflective, model critical thinking skills and work well either independently or collaboratively.

The reports analyzed concede that most teachers possess some of these traits and that some teachers possess all of them. The primary question then becomes how to help teacher preparation programs help the majority of new teachers acquire more of these qualities.

Much of what reformers suggested parallels four major recommendations of the 1989 Project 30 Year One Report, *The*

Reform of Teacher Education for the 21st Century. This report called for teachers to possess: (1) subject-matter understanding, (2) general and liberal knowledge, (3) pedagogical content knowledge and (4) multicultural, international and other human perspectives.

The need to prepare teachers better in subject-matter fields, especially at the elementary level, first appeared in the 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk*. In this report, a survey of 1,350 institutions training teachers showed that preservice elementary school teachers spent 41% of their time in education courses, reducing the amount of time available to study subject-matter courses.

Goodlad's 1984 report, *A Place Called School*, called for an undergraduate faculty to design the best general education possible for elementary school teachers. Goodlad speculated that it would look much like the general education a liberal arts undergraduate should receive.

A Nation Prepared summarized the situation this way:

> Prospective elementary teachers take a substantial number of courses in education, secondary teachers only a few. The result is that elementary teachers have relatively little exposure to the subjects they will teach and secondary teachers very little preparation for the art of teaching the subjects within which they majored.

Additionally, many of the reports addressed the fact that few teachers understand how children and adolescents learn. *Teacher Development in Schools*, the 1985 report of the Academy for Educational Development, stated that no matter what level of mastery teachers have within their subject-matter field, they "need to develop a coherent, practical concept of how learning occurs." Aside from one or two courses in child or adolescent psychology, few teachers have systematically observed and studied how children develop and learn.

Synthesizing these viewpoints, *A Nation Prepared* recommended, "Teachers need a command of the subjects they teach, a sound grasp of the techniques of teaching those

Murray, Frank B. and Daniel Fallon. *The Reform of Teacher Education for the 21st Century: Project 30 Year One Report*. Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware, 1989.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. Washington, D.C.: The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983.

Goodlad, John I. *A Place Called School*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1984.

Academy for Educational Development. *Teacher Development in Schools: A Report to the Ford Foundation*. New York: Academy for Educational Development, 1985.

subjects and an understanding of children's growth and development and of their different needs and learning styles."

Tomorrow's Teachers advocated certain consistent standards for teacher preparation programs, noting that educational research and scholarship have matured sufficiently to provide "a solid base for an intellectually vital program of professional studies." Subsequently, the report called for an approach to professional studies integrating five components it defined as necessary to any quality teacher preparation program:

> The first is the study of teaching and schooling as an academic field with its own integrity. The second is knowledge of the pedagogy of subject matter — the capacity to translate personal knowledge into interpersonal knowledge, used for teaching. A related third component is comprised of the skills and understandings implicit in classroom teaching — creating a communal setting where various groups of students can develop and learn. The fourth consists of the dispositions, values and ethical responsibilities that distinguish teaching from other professions. Finally, all these aspects of professional studies must be integrated into the clinical experience where formal knowledge must be used as a guide to practical action.

Inherent within these recommendations is the call for teachers who can model critical-thinking skills and teach the structure of thinking. The Holmes Group report identified "interactive teaching" as necessary to professional competence:

> Central to the vision are competent teachers empowered to make principled judgments on their students' behalf. They possess broad and deep understanding of children, the subjects they teach, the nature of learning and schooling and the world around them. They exemplify the critical thinking they strive to develop in students, combining tough-minded instruction with a penchant for inquiry. . . . Competent teachers are careful not to bore, confuse or demean students, pushing them instead to interact with important

knowledge and skill. Such teachers interpret the understandings students bring to and develop during lessons; they identify students' misconceptions and question their surface responses that mask true learning.

A Nation Prepared stressed that competent teachers help students see "patterns of meaning" in place of confusion, become autonomous learners capable of working with others and strive to develop their creative potentials. It described these teachers as constantly seeking knowledge both about teaching and about the world around them. They model critical-thinking skills, independence and the ability to work collaboratively with others. They not only are capable of communicating what they know, but also inspire students to acquire their own knowledge. "We are describing people of substantial intellectual accomplishment," the report said.

Teachers For Our Nation's Schools asserted that teacher preparation programs should "ensure that all candidates progressing through them possess or acquire the literacy and critical-thinking abilities associated with the concept of an educated person." It also advocated "extensive opportunities for future teachers to move beyond being students of organized knowledge to become teachers who inquire into both knowledge and its teaching."

In summary, reform reports called for improvements in teacher preparation which reflect the teacher's need to understand the learner, the process of learning and the influence of culture upon learners. Schools of education must prepare teachers who know how to teach while reflecting a strong underpinning of subject-area knowledge and pedagogical-content knowledge. Teachers need the ability to model critical thinking, to advance the understanding of their students, and to organize information and knowledge so that students can incorporate the same into their personal repertoire. Teacher preparation programs need to educate future teachers accordingly.

Strengthening the Profession

Research the Practice of Teaching

Many reform reports of the late 1980s called for ***continued research into the practice of teaching.*** *Work in Progress* cited an obligation to continue ". . . collaborative inquiry with practitioners; targeted programs of research on questions central to teacher education; experiments with new methods of inquiry; and policy and evaluation research related to teacher education." Postulate 11 of Goodlad's 19 conditions for the improvement of teacher education stated: "Programs for the education of educators must be conducted in such a way that future teachers inquire into the nature of teaching and schooling and assume that they will do so as a natural aspect of their careers."

Thus, not only should schools of education continue such research, but all educators also need to be sensitized to think of themselves as researchers constantly probing for increased understanding and knowledge of educational processes. Similar sentiments are found in *A Call For Change In Teacher Education* (by the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education), *Project 30, Tomorrow's Teachers* and others.

National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education. *A Call For Change In Teacher Education*. Washington, DC.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1985.

Howsam, Robert B., Dean C. Corrigan and George W. Denemark. *Educating A Profession: Reprint With Postscript 1985*. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1985.

Enhance the Clinical Experience

Another series of recommendations found throughout the literature of reform may be classified under the heading of ***strengthening and integrating the clinical experience of teachers.*** Two 1985 reports, *Educating A Profession* and *A Call For Change In Teacher Education*, echoed the perceptions of many reformers who believe the student teaching experience is too limited as now practiced. *A Call For Change In Teacher*

Education recommends: "Following their completion of a teacher education program and the awarding of a provisional certificate, new teachers should complete an induction period or internship of at least a year's duration for which compensation is provided."

Rigden, Diana W. *What Business Leaders Can Do To Help Change Teacher Education*. Washington. D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1990.

What Business Leaders Can Do To Help Change Teacher Education called for the creation of model teacher education programs with the support of the business community. This support may take a variety of forms, including: "Using the model of teaching hospitals, many schools of education are beginning to establish relationships with local school districts to set up special schools that provide student teachers with extended, well-supervised experiences in classroom teaching and school interactions," according to the 1990 report.

In 1989, the Holmes Group proposed extended programs for teacher education, suggesting: ". . . more time to prepare a teacher is being staked out in the form of 'integrated, extended' programs — usually five (or more) years in duration, including an internship that is both intensively supervised and formally reflected upon."

In discussing the clinical experience of future teachers, *Tomorrow's Teachers, A Nation Prepared, A Call For Change In Teacher Education* and others recommended that teacher preparation programs work with schools to introduce differentiated staffing patterns as a means of better using the talents of master teachers. Through such university/school partnerships, ". . . teachers might work with the induction of new teachers, in development of curricula, on peer review panels, in cooperative research and development projects and in different time assignments, such as a 10- or 11-month school year or a part-time assignment," said *A Call For Change In Teacher Education*.

<u>Reform the Selection Process for Teacher Candidates</u>

A recurring area of concern commonly discussed in reform reports involves the induction of new teachers into the profession. Two recommendations come to the forefront: (1) ***Schools of education need to regulate more stringently the selection of teacher education candidates***, and (2)

there needs to be a sustained drive to recruit under-represented populations into teaching.

Schlechty, Phillip C. *Reform in Teacher Education: A Sociological View*. Louisville, Kentucky: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1990.

Phillip C. Schlechty, author of *Reform in Teacher Education: A Sociological View*, advocated implementation of a recruitment and selection process as a means of creating:

> . . . a distinctive occupational subculture and a clear occupational identity . . . . I am, in fact, convinced that the development and articulation of specific criteria for recruitment could contribute greatly to the creation of such an identity, perhaps even more than the emerging research base will contribute. In addition, such criteria could increase the vitality of teacher education as a component in the occupational socialization of teachers.

Schlechty recommended three factors that should be taken into account in this process: (1) Selection criteria should be directly related to recruitment criteria; (2) criteria should be high enough to ensure that everyone who aspires to enter will not be able to do so; and (3) schools of education should set numerical goals for recruitment.

Goodlad added in *Teachers For Our Nation's Schools* that "the responsible group of academic and clinical faculty members must seek out and select for a predetermined number of student places in the program those candidates who reveal an initial commitment to the moral, ethical and enculturating responsibilities to be assumed."

Noteworthy within discussions of the recruitment of highly qualified teacher candidates is the need to attract members of underrepresented populations. As of 1989, Project 30 reported that 76% of the nation's teacher education students were women, 90% were white, 4% percent were black, 1.5% Hispanic, 2.5% Asian, 0.3% Native American. Yet, 20% of students in public schools are black and 10% are Hispanic.

In view of these statistics, there is little wonder that reformers call for recruiting more minorities into the teaching profession. The 1989 report of Project 30 stated:

> Consider the fact that at the present time 81 different languages are spoken by the pupils in the Los Angeles schools, with as many as 20 different languages spoken in some classrooms. Or consider the fact that by the 21st century 40% of the nation's pupils will be minorities, while 95% of their teachers will be white; this means that most pupils will not be taught by a single minority teacher at any time in their school career. . . . Tomorrow's teachers will face classrooms of pupils that will be markedly more diverse and varied than today's classrooms.

Consequently, not only do teachers need sensitivity to multicultural perspectives and global education, but they also need to be more representative of the population, according to *A Call For Change In Teacher Education, Work in Progress: The Holmes Group One Year On, Educating A Profession* and *Who Will Teach Our Children?*, among others.

California Commission on the Teaching Profession. *Who Will Teach Our Children? A Strategy for Improving California's Schools*. Sacramento: California Commission on the Teaching Profession, 1985.

Changes Within and Outside Schools of Education

Encompass Outside Entities

Another recommendation of recent reform reports is that ***improved teacher education should extend beyond the walls of the university.*** According to *Tomorrow's Teachers*, improving the quality of teachers is impossible without improving the quality of their education. But, improving the quality of their education cannot be accomplished without changing the universities, the credentialing systems and the public schools. The report notes:

> As difficult as it may be, any promising reform agenda must address the interdependence of institutional functions and responsibilities. The rewards and career opportunities for teachers; the

standards, nature and substance of professional education; the quality and coherence of the liberal arts and subject-matter fields; and the professional certification and licensing apparatus must all be changed together in a mutually compatible fashion.

The Project Alliance 30. *Project 30 Year Two Report: Institutional Accomplishments*. Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware, 1991.

The 1991 *Project 30 Year Two Report: Institutional Accomplishments* concurred, adding that changes within the universities themselves may be a first priority:

> It also is clear that the modern preparation of teachers requires much more than the efforts of any single university faculty. The task is beyond the faculties of schools of education, and all faculties in the university, especially the faculties of arts and sciences, must participate in reform. The redesign of the teacher education curriculum must ground pedagogy in the arts and sciences and promote the study of discipline-based pedagogy throughout the academy. Further, joint efforts of cooperating faculties can demonstrate convincingly to the public that universities have accepted major responsibility for teacher education and thus for the quality of our schools.

The Holmes Group One Year On noted that:

> The Holmes reforms advance along an uneven front formed by the many state policies affecting teacher education. . . . The Holmes Group is among a number of contending influences, and many institutions are struggling to manage change in a turbulent political environment. State policy has been supportive of Holmes initiatives in some instances, hostile in others . . . .
>
> . . . responding to new state requirements had preempted faculty energy and attention, leaving little appetite for yet another round of reform.

A Call For Change In Teacher Education recommended that states determine certification and program-approval standards in consultation with the profession. Additionally, *What State*

Frazier, Calvin and Patrick Callan. *What State Leaders Can Do To Help Change Teacher Education*. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1990.

Leaders Can Do To Help Change Teacher Education emphasized that "institutions of higher education and the public schools must work together to achieve long-term change and the restructuring necessary to turn education around." It also said that "state leadership is a necessary condition for real reform" and that "comprehensive, systematic reform of teacher education must be an integral part of state policies to restructure public and secondary education."

However, *Teachers For Our Nation's Schools* would limit such influence, stating, "Programs for the education of educators, in order to be vital and renewing, must be free from curricular specifications by licensing agencies and restrained only by enlightened professionally driven requirements for accreditation." It further argued that such programs "must be protected from the vagaries of supply and demand by state policies that allow neither backdoor 'emergency' programs nor temporary teaching licenses."

Conclusion

In summary, reform reports suggest recurring themes for the improvement of teacher preparation programs:

- ***Schools of education must model the good teaching that they advocate.***
- ***Improvements in teacher training must reflect the teacher's need to understand the learner, the process of learning and the influence of culture upon learners. Teachers need to know how to teach, reflecting a strong underpinning of subject-area and pedagogical-content knowledge. They need the ability to model critical thinking, to advance the understanding of their students and to organize information and knowledge***

so that students can incorporate the same into their personal repertoire.

- ***Continued research into the practice of teaching is needed.***
- ***Efforts must be made to strengthen and integrate the clinical experience of teachers.***
- ***Schools of education need to regulate more stringently the selection of teacher education candidates and to recruit underrepresented populations into teaching.***
- ***Improved teacher education should extend beyond the walls of the university, embracing local schools, state policy makers, credentialing organizations and others.***

While these six proposals represent a modest compendium of the many offered in the last 10 years, they serve to engender discussion focused upon the improvement of teacher preparation programs. Obviously, schools of education cannot single-handedly bring about education reform. Neither they, nor any entity working in isolation, can produce sustained, proficient results. It is only through the collaborative efforts of concerned citizens, school boards, educational institutions, businesses, governing organizations and society as a whole that relevant, contiguous, persistent improvements can succeed in America's schools. Consequently, each organization or group must introduce internal reforms while, concurrently, working collaboratively with the whole to make significant educational change. Whatever directions such collaborations take, they need to contribute to improvement in teacher preparation programs as well as reform within the classroom.

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